

Rules for the Financial Scholars Essay Scholarship Contest

The Office of the Kansas Securities Commissioner (KSC) and the Office of the State Bank Commissioner (OSBC) are dedicated to keeping Kansans informed about issues concerning their finances, and promoting integrity and increasing transparency and fairness in the financial services industry. Our agencies are sponsoring an essay competition and will award up to fifteen scholarships to Kansas high school seniors this school year.

Student Scholarship Awards:

First Place:	\$2,500
Second Place:	\$2,000
Third Place:	\$1,500
Fourth Place:	\$1,000
Fifth Place:	\$500

Up to ten \$100 Honorable Mention scholarships will also be issued to students.

STUDENT TOPIC ASSIGNMENT

Essay Part 1: The Profile

In a 1-2 page essay (**maximum 500 words**), profile someone whose personal financial decisions and example have positively impacted your life or the lives of others. The profiled person (or persons, if a couple) can be living or deceased, personally known to you, or world-renowned.

Essay Part 2: Real-world Application

Accompanying the profile, provide a 3-6 page analysis (**800-1500 words**) of how you will apply the lesson(s) learned from the individual you profiled to your own life as you prepare for higher education. Please incorporate at least two of the following into your analysis:

- Comparison of the cost of various types of higher education (i.e. technical college, community college, 4-year college, private vs. public school, or the choice of a school in Kansas vs. out-of-state school, etc.)
- The positive and negative aspects of getting a loan for higher education versus paying your way through college (through scholarships, grants, working, etc.), or finding other ways to save or cut education-related costs
- The earning potential of your chosen degree/field and the average debt load and loan pay-off time the average graduate in that field will face upon completing higher education. Consider the job market demand and forecast for positions in your chosen field, and the versatility of your degree/certification.
- The importance of generational re-investment (i.e. knowledge, wealth, presence, etc.) as a part of a long-term sustainability solution for Kansas communities

WHO

The competition is open to any public, private or homeschooled Kansas high school Senior who meets the following two qualifications:

- 1) The Senior must be planning to attend a Kansas technical school, college or university**
- 2) The Senior must have *enrolled in and completed at least one KSC or OSBC sponsored program** (*EverFi, Life\$mart*s or *The Stock Market Game*) during their high school career. A parent or teacher will be asked to verify student participation in one of the sponsored programs to confirm eligibility. Successful completion of a sponsored course by **May 3rd** is required before an awarded prize can be claimed.

Teacher Prizes:

Two teacher prizes will be awarded. The teacher of the first place student winner will receive a \$150 gift card to the teacher supply store of his or her choice. The teacher who is credited with the most ****valid** entries submitted will receive a \$100 gift card.

***If you are not enrolled in a sponsored program but would like to enroll for free today and be eligible for this year's Essay Scholarship Contest, call Shannon Stone at 913.652.9164 (Securities Commissioner's Office), or Dana Branam at 785.296.1783 (Bank Commissioner's Office).**

*****"Valid"** means that the essay meets the appropriate length and submission requirements. Incomplete entries will not count.

HOW

- Essays must be the original work of the student.
- Format: Word document
- Entries must be in English and typed in 12-point font and double-spaced.
- The profile portion should not exceed 500 words. Consider op-ed style for this portion.
- The personal application and analysis portion should be between 800 and 1500 words.
- Sources: Can use MLA or APA style on Bibliography. In-text source citation is preferred in parentheses (avoid footnotes please).

A completed Entry Form must accompany each essay submission. Words on Entry Form will not count toward the total word count. The Entry Form may be typed or neatly handwritten.

WHEN

Essay submissions will be accepted **December 1, 2015** through **11:59 p.m. CST Friday, April 1, 2016**. Judge's clock is the official time keeper.

Entry forms and essays should be merged into a single Word document attachment and emailed by the deadline to shannon.stone@ksc.ks.gov. Please save the document as <School_StudentName>.

Announcement of Winners & Award Date:

The winning essays will be announced on or before Friday, April 22, 2016. Scholarships will be awarded at the 2016 Financial Scholars Awards Ceremony in Topeka, KS on **Tuesday, May 3, 2016.** *Students will be expected to attend the Ceremony unless they have a sufficient reason they cannot attend. Not attending the Ceremony to receive the certificate of scholarship could result in forfeiture of the scholarship.*

JUDGING & LEGAL TERMS

Essays will be judged based on the following criteria:

- Understanding of and Adherence to Essay Requirements (30 points)
 - Student demonstrates financial knowledge and conveys the importance of financial literacy; student accurately and consistently connects lessons learned from profiled individual(s) to analysis bullet points
- Word choice, Punctuation and Spelling (30 points)
 - Student displays wide vocabulary range and good word choice; proper grammar is displayed with little to no grammatical errors (please have a parent or teacher proofread your essay before submitting)
- Personal Expression, Fluency and Supporting Evidence (40 points)
 - Student uses personality in their writing; essays are organized with clear introduction, sentences/paragraphs flow smoothly; credible sources are used to support information given

By submitting an entry to the competition, entrants acknowledge that all submissions may be posted on the OSBC's or the KSC's website or their social media outlets, as well as the KansasMoney.gov website for viewing by the general public. Entrants also grant in perpetuity, a nonexclusive license to edit, publish, display, duplicate or otherwise use the submission, and photographs and video of the participants in connection with this contest, for the Sponsors (OSBC and KSC) and their Designees in their sole discretion whatsoever and without further notice or compensation.